

7-3

Men Who Enjoy Being Women

Reference

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**Become
Your
Woman
Inside!**

Intussions

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Dear Reader.....

Are you ready for it? I know it is very early to be talking about it, however when you publish every two months you have to work a bit in the future. The "it" I'm referring to is **CHRISTMAS!!!!!!** It is nearly here and one should be thinking about what you can do for the less fortunate than us! Please remember that we will once again have our **"FOOD BANK"** and **"CALGARY WOMEN'S SHELTER TOY DRIVE"** going this year and we hope you will help us support them. Anytime you can drop by some food or a toy we can start collecting for those in need. Once you have solidly implanted into your brain this undertaking then you can start worrying about **"What to Wear"** over this **"Holiday Season"**. We all need new outfits and especially at this time of year, don't forget about our **Christmas Potluck Dinner** and let us know what you are going to bring for all to share.

This time of the year is also a time to get ready for new times and changes. The club has changed the last social date of the month to the last **FRIDAY** of the month instead of the last Thursday of the month. The middle Saturday social times remains the same.

Personally, I am undergoing a major change in my life and I am looking forward to spending this holiday season and the rest of my life in my gender of choice. Hopefully I will see all of you at the mid-month November Social. Life can really be an adventure if you want it to be.

Please remember that life is what you make it and if you forget through out the year how fortunate you are, try to remember that no matter how bad you think you have it, people out there are way worse off! At this time of the year the less fortunate really need our help!!!! **Please support our charity drives.**

In Garlands and Giving,

Love..... **Barbie & Christine**



Gay Lines

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Illusions Calendar

CALGARY

Nov. 16 - Regular Social
Nov. 29 - Novice Night Social
Dec. 14 - Christmas Potluck Dinner Social
Jan. 18 - Bingo Night Social
Jan. 31 - Regular Social
Feb. 15 - Las Vegas Night
REMEMBER: Last FRIDAY of the month instead of last Thursday of the month for month end Social.

EDMONTON

Nov. 14 - Fashion Show Social
Dec. 12 - Christmas Dinner Social
Jan. 9 - Make-up Night Social
Feb. 15 - Winterfest Social

For Illusions Edmonton information call either 486-9661 or 488-3234 leave a message for Roxanne or Rachel

RED DEER

Socials: Every Last Saturday of the Month at "The Other Place Bar". The address is Bay 3 & 4 5579-47 St. Red Deer, Alberta. Call (403) 342-6440 for details.

REMEMBER:

Attendance to Illusions Calgary and Edmonton functions require that you be a member or invited guest, of either Illusions or an Illusions member.

For location information, or other details about who we are call:

(403) 236-7072 Calgary
(403) 486-9661 Edmonton

DID YOU
GET OUT
FOR ALL
HALLOWS
EVE?
OR
DID YOU
GET
BIZAARED??

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Hot Ads



How Beverly becomes Beverly Elizabeth

(The trials and tribulations of crossdressing in a small community)

Halloween is the perfect opportunity for crossdressers to dress and venture about with little or no attention paid to the outfits they wear. So we make the most of this special day. I live in a small town in B.C. and work in a job that is very much in the public eye. If people knew that I was a crossdresser it would make life very difficult here. On Sat Oct 28, I was invited to a house party. It was a birthday combo halloween party all in one. Costumes were the order of dress. The hostess was a police woman and several at the party were police officers. Dare I pass into the jaws of the beast or what? Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

I had decided that if "Beverly" was going to attend, that she had to go as a movie star, royalty, dignitary or such so as to make it appear that the dress was just part of the effect. Every little bit of illusions helps with the security of the real self. I decided to portray Elizabeth Taylor for the party. With my wife's help I picked out a dress that was Elizabeth's type and colour. With all the necessary items at hand, a nervous and excited Beverly spent the day locked inside our home completing all the preparations for the evening. The moment arrived, 7pm and "Beverly" stood at the door of my friend's house. The fellow at the door that I knew well, welcomed me in and did not seem to recognize me. It took the hostess a few minutes to realize who this woman was that stood before her. She loved it and had to introduce me to everyone. Most of the people did not recognize me at all! I became the hit of the party and was the recipient of lots of compliments. I made passes at a couple of police officers that dropped by and it was priceless to see the reactions of them. Beverly Elizabeth had arrived!

Beverly Elizabeth was tested throughout the evening: how she danced, how she sat, how she picked up a dropped napkin, how she walked. Her legs were a topic of conversation during the night! The hostess took pictures of all of the costumes and I tried to do a seductive pose, but I was a little nervous and not very practiced.

The evening was a great success, Beverly Elizabeth had a fantastic time, escorted home to top it off! My new nickname became "Liz". The evening has become a fond memory. Its too bad that too much of a good thing can be bad, especially in a small town.

I took a monumental risk and succeeded. My mother would be pleased. And I am sure "Mom" is pleased to.

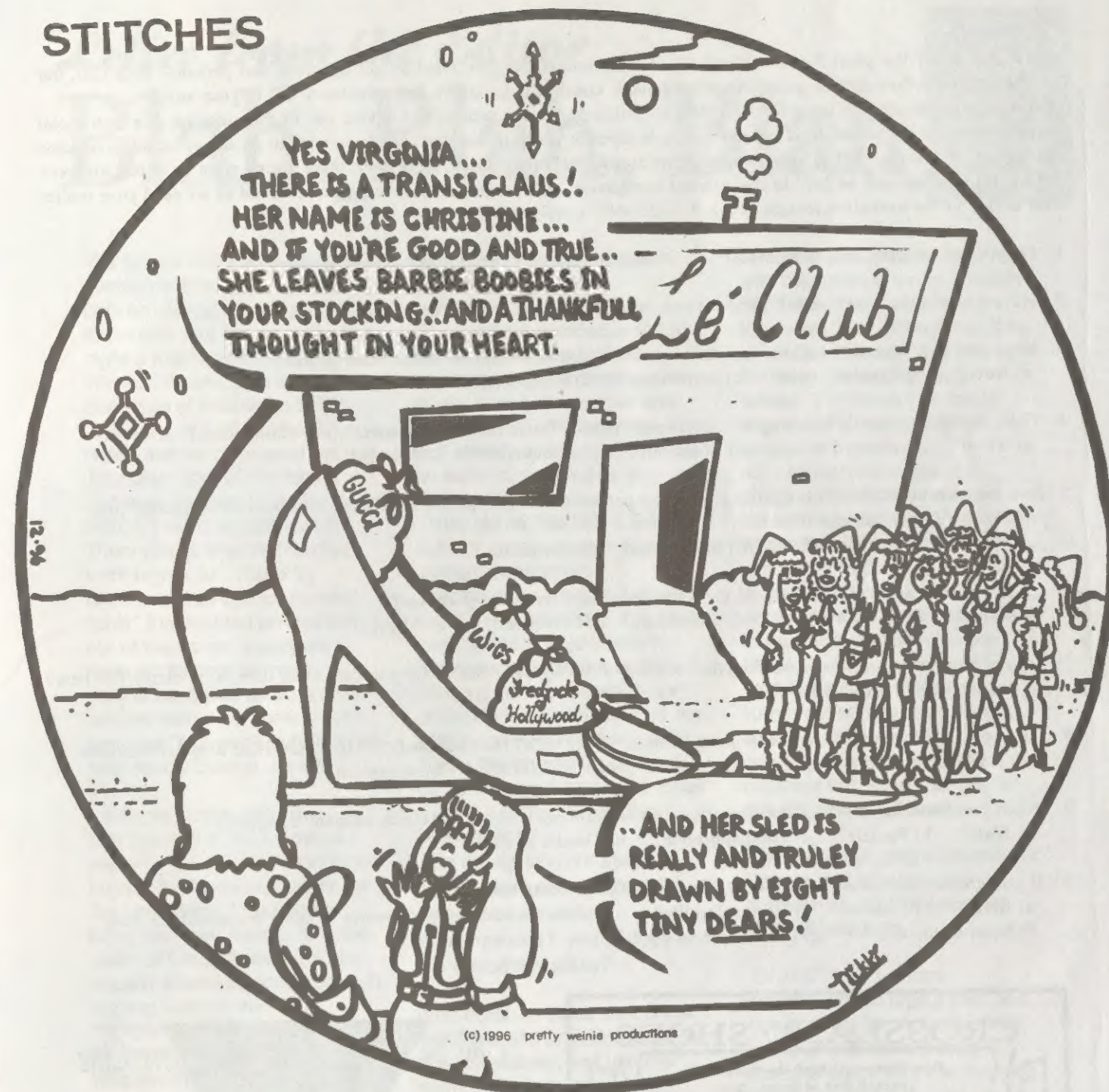
Love Beverly Elizabeth

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Michelle's Note: When Beverly refers to her mother, she means her birth mother, who by the way, since the events of this story has been told about Beverly and it has turned out OK! Her reference to her Mom, is to her confidant and intimate friend...me! She calls me mom because I am always giving her advice. I have a CD "Mom" as well...Stephanie Walker. She tells me that I am the daughter that never listens. The truth is I do listen and more than she knows. Beverly's story is really about a person stepping outside of their regular persona and bravely heading towards the reality of her life. I am very much in awe of what Beverly accomplished for herself. Her story touched a nerve within me as I also live in a small community and I wish I could continue to live my real and complete life amongst my friends and neighbours. Her story shows that given careful planning and execution this may be possible and I feel it is a lesson to us all. I need the personal gizzard to get on with it! Thanks for sharing your experience with us Beverly!

Love Michelle

STITCHES



by: nikki
Merry Christmas Illusions

WHAT SEX? GENDER IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE.

In the interest of the great forward march of human knowledge, we want to get up close and personal with you, our members. The following is a questionnaire on gender, check it out - take a few minutes to fill in your answers. If you wish to submit it to us at ILLUSIONS, we will compile the results, and advise you of the outcome at a club social in the not too distant future. It is not necessary to identify yourself, but you can if you wish to do so, we could have some interesting responses. Fill in as many questions as you feel are relevant, remember, there are no right or wrong answers. All the information will be held in the strictest confidence, and we promise not to giggle too loud as we read your replies over coffee in the executive lounge at the ILLUSIONS Corporate offices.

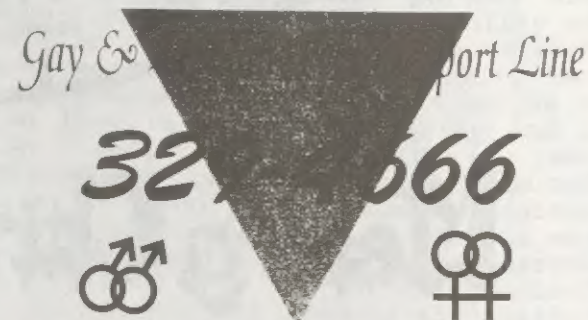
1. Do you see yourself as? a) Male? b) Female? c) Other - please explain?
2. Have you always seen yourself? a) As you indicated above? b) Is this a more recent development?
3. Have you ever speculated about what life would be like as a member of the other gender?
a) Never? b) Once or twice? c) Sometimes? d) Frequently? e) Always?
4. Have you ever worn the clothing of the opposite gender for fun or entertainment? (e.g. Halloween.)
a) Never? b) Once or twice? c) Sometimes? d) Frequently? e) Always?
5. Have you ever worn the clothing of the opposite gender in an attempt to "pass" as a member of that group? (e.g. professional female impersonator.)
a) Never? b) Once or twice? c) Sometimes? d) Frequently?
6. Have you ever worn the clothing of the opposite gender for erotic purposes?
a) Never? b) Once or twice? c) Sometimes? d) Frequently? e) Always?
7. Do you have any experiences wearing the clothing of the opposite gender for purposes other than those mentioned here?
If so, please explain.
8. Have you ever considered sex reassignment surgery? If so, a) How seriously? b) Researched hospital facilities?
c) Lived and worked as a member of the other gender? d) Other? Please explain.
9. When you fantasize about sexual scenarios, in your fantasies, you are; (check as many as apply.)
a) Male? b) Female? c) Hermaphrodite? d) Gender neutral?
10. If you are re-incarnated, in your next life, you'd like to come back as?
a) Male? b) Female? c) Hermaphrodite? d) Gender neutral? e) A moose or other woodland creature?
f) None of the above? g) Other? (please explain.)

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Letter from the Editor

Blah, Blah, Blah



The Bizarre Ball was a fabulous evening with its visual feasts both on and off the stage. For those gals that helped make the night a memorable one..thanks! We will probably plan to have the Ball again at Halloween time!

Speaking of parties..You'll notice that we have axed the last Thursday night of the month and have decided to try the last FRIDAY night of each month. There was a time that discreet work nights..ie ..Thursday nights, worked well for married "gals" that needed an excuse out of the house. Lately we have felt that not as many people need that as an option and are actual not coming out because "its a work night"! So as your needs change, so will Illusions.

Illusions parties also have changed abit in the format as well. We at B&B will no longer be buying the food and pop etc for the gatherings. You need to bring your own fixings. With the costs of things these days..its already financially tough enough helping support the club "ROOM" as we do. So its now BYOW (the W ...stands for Whatever!)

SPEAKING OF PARTIES...
A common dilemma with all of the Gals..is the Bathroom situation.

I know that this issue has been touched on before but now I'll attempt to tackle it.

Just this past weekend our very

own Karen was sipping a few cold ones at her local pub...enfemme...when the management decided to forbid her from using the ladies washroom. She promptly went home..changed into Ken and carried on with the evening. She had already entertained them at an earlier date..billed as a Female Impersonator.

They did not feel that it was right for a crossdresser to use a woman's washroom.

Just because you are dressed up as a woman should that be carte -blanc to avail oneself of the opposite's gender facilities? I have gone into the washroom on an Illusions evening..and the seat is up! How ladylike is that?

Even though you 're dressed up as the opposite gender does it make it correct to use the ladies space?

On the flip side..if I'm in jeans..should I stroll into the men's washroom? would you be comfortable?

Just because some sanctioned functions and specific places let you crossdress and use the woman's washroom's..doesn't mean that all of society is keen. You might think that you are passing as the opposite gender but you are really still a guy in a skirt.

In today's litigious society, one should really be careful of pushing the limits.

MY other thoughts on this deal with the masculine way in which MEN think that just because they want to do something..they should be able to.. That was not the way I was raised...as a female. If a female was told to stay out of a male saturated area..she would back off..probably apologize for creating a situation, back up immediately and find an alternative. That's the female way. Blazing a trail is a domineering masculine role that achieves nothing and especially looks bad if you're wearing a dress.

I'm not trying to just single Karen out on this one... I think that she did the right thing actually..she was eager to continue her "date" but not at the discomfort of others.

I was actually going to chat about People that Misrepresent themselves...but I'll save that topic till next time.

CHRISTINE...is in the hospital..as I'm typing this...and she is doing Ok. Actually today she is in and out of a drug haze...surgery was this morning. Soon she'll be back with us..We all wish her well with her journey! Bravo! Three Cheers for all of those that are proud of who they are..and not afraid to be seen!

Lots of Love
BARBIE

THRONE SPEECH

Michelle Hart, Illusions Empress VI

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"House Keeping and Other Such Things...?"

As part of my last Throne Speech, I described some of my trials and tribulations about getting ready to go to the Ball in Edmonton in and around it, some of the many other things going on in my life at the time. I said that ready or not I was going and I would let you know how it all turned out. **It turned out great!** Brenda and I traveled to Edmonton with Princess Christine. The ball was on Sunday Evening, but we decided to leave on Saturday and stop in Red Deer and spend the evening with old friends at the "Other Place" and after a nice dinner put on for us by Belle and Christine we hit the road. Later than planned (of course) but we still got into Red Deer, got a motel room, got dressed and arrived at Doug's (The Other Place) with enough time to have an enjoyable evening.

Next day we moved on to Edmonton. While Christine was parking the car I went into the Hotel Lobby to find out where we were supposed to go. Three feet past the front door I bumped into Roxanne. After some big hugs I

asked her where Princess Rachel could be found. She pointed a direction and I was off. I didn't find Rachel, but I did find Dixie. After another hug and a short conversation, I asked Dixie where I could find Rachel. She pointed a direction and I was off. It turned out the place she pointed to was the "Courts" hospitality suit. Oh darn, I didn't find Rachel there either! But, I did find Kiwi and Casey and of course I had to take a moment to say hello. There were no more chairs left, so I knelt on the floor beside them and we talked for a bit. A bell went off in my head, reminding me that my mission was to find out where we were supposed to go. So, I said gotta' go, stood up and as I turned around I walked right into Her Most Imperial Sovereign Majesty "Empress" Rhonda of the ISCCA from Calgary. Well we had to chat for a bit too! With siren's blaring I disengaged and headed for the lobby with the intent of going to the front desk and asking where the "Illusions" hospitality suite was. As I did so Brenda and Christine entered the Lobby with all and I mean all the baggage and I started to feel like a total idiot. I mean really, my blond hair was still packed away in it's travel bucket! Michelle gotta' point? Yes dear, always. What? Well... some times, despite our mission we get distracted. So is that your point? Nope, my point is that despite the distractions we still got to the suite even though I wasn't that much help and we all went on to have a wonderful evening! The "Illusions" gals from Edmonton did an amazing job with the hospitality suite. Rachel, Beth, Dixie, Joanne and the "maid" are all to be complemented. Moments before we left the rooms for the Ball room, Brenda helped me clasp the Rhinestone bracelet and choker

that I had borrowed from Stephanie on Saturday morning. Do you remember that in my last writing that I lamented that if only I had them I would feel complete and finished by saying, "Well there is always Saturday morning"! Well, Saturday morning came, I phoned Stephanie and without the blink of an eye I had what I needed! I could write books about how I feel about it all...let's just say, it's just great to have friends. I suppose that if I have a point is that we should feel free to use our friends to meet our own needs and that as individuals we could have a lot to gain by doing so! Maybe the other side of that coin is that if we if we over do it we abuse are friends and then we risk being alone again. Friendships, as do all relationships, require give and take and without bean counting we have to keep it all in balance. Lasting friendships require maintenance, which is after all, just another bit of **house keeping!**

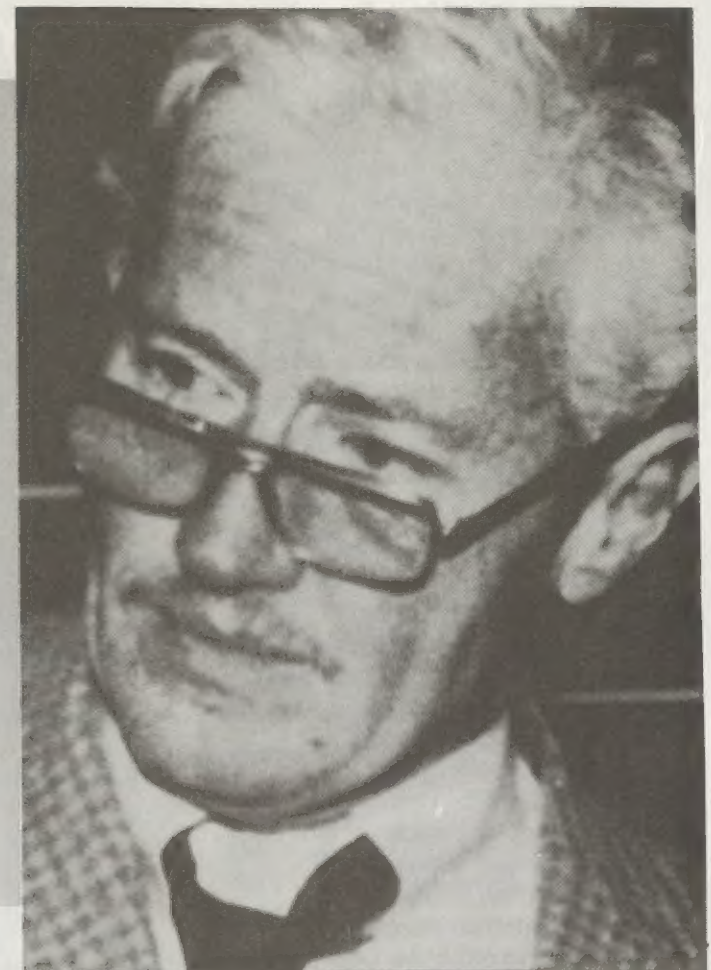
Speaking of house keeping...housekeeping, what is that? Is it dusting, is it vacuuming or is it washing dishes. Well it is some of that, but it's not what I mean. In the context of this article it's really about paying attention to the details. In this case the term housekeeping implies being introspective, going backward to solve a problem, to clean up a mess, to put things in order and to find an understood and solid base from which we can carry on into the future. You know you can't stay where you are.... right! So we are all always heading into the future and to do so with the least form of stress we need a good foundation to start from. That's housekeeping ... always! We worry about it, but hey that's why somebody invented it! Before you start to thinking that Micelle has finally gone over

continued on page 26....

Crime



Her life as a man: left, Camilla Lyman as she appeared at the Winsor School in 1950, and, right, in later years, after dog steroids caused her to grow a mustache and lose her hair.



The Case of the Missing, Cross-Dressing Brahmin Heiress

BY JOHN SEDGWICK

How could it be that the daughter of a prominent Boston family could disappear and almost no one cared?

Camilla Lyman, a burly crossdressing Boston heiress and dog fancier vanished from her home in Rhode Island, nine years ago. She had been talking on the phone with a friend when the line went dead. Apparently that would not have been out

of character for her as her behaviour had become increasingly erratic possibly due to the bull-derived steroid hormones she'd been taking. Meant for dogs, the pills had thinned her short grey hair to a widow's peak, allowed her to

grow a thick moustache and caused her voice to deepen dramatically. With the transformation, she had legally changed her name to the more masculine Cam, and friends had started referring to her as "he". When friends went the next day

to check on her, they found the telephone ripped from the wall and Lyman's treasured attache' case was missing. Crammed with her family jewelry, cherished dog photographs and up to \$300,000 in cash, it normally went with her everywhere, she even slept with it in her bed. Many of her dogs had been left unfed in their pens. Despite these troubling circumstances, they did not call the police. She may have simply gone off as she often did.

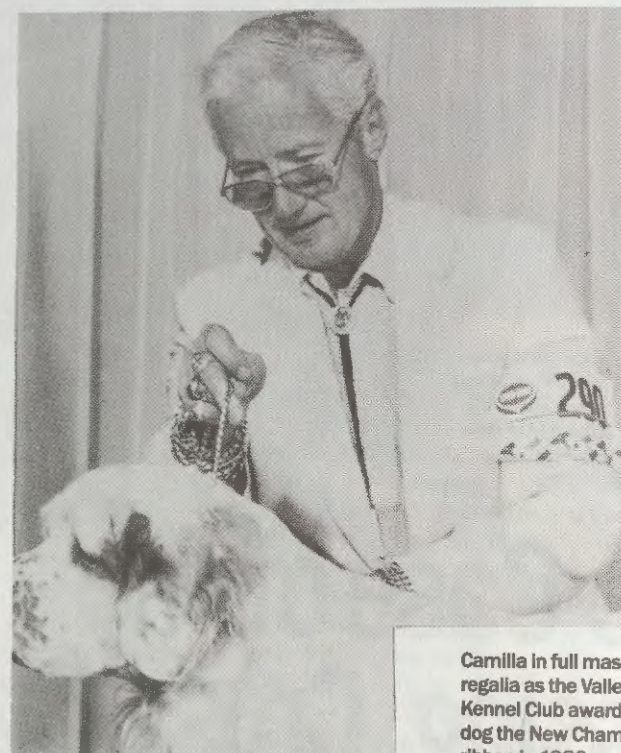
She has never returned, nor has she ever surfaced anywhere else. Last summer, after an exhaustive court proceeding, the state of Rhode Island finally declared her legally dead.

Camilla had attended a private school in Boston being raised in the grand Wasp tradition. Solitary, gruff, dog loving, mannish, Camilla Lyman represented what literary critics call a "demonic parody" of the bossy, asexual female of the Wasp species. She was the Barbara Bush on steroids. She had been so offensive over the years that the Lyman's tried to cast her out; and when she finally left on her own, she entered a social oblivion that made her ultimate disappearance merely a formality.

How can an heiress simply disappear- without getting a rise out of the tabloids at least? Camilla had possessed as much as \$6 million to \$11 million from the vast Lyman family fortune.

Camilla was born in 1932, the youngest of four children. She was called Butch by the family, but only because she was always so big and brawny. She shone at sports in school, but classmates were put off by her shy, wallflower manner and occasionally explosive temper.

She disliked her mother but adored her father. There were certain standards the Lymans struggled to maintain that Camilla could not conform to. She dropped out of college to return to live with her parents. She drifted into her lifelong habit of staying up all night and sleeping through the day. She bickered constantly with her mother while her father tried to smooth things over by buying Camilla a show dog named Bombi.



Camilla in full masculine regalia as the Valley Kennel Club awards her dog the New Champion ribbon in 1986

territory. She dressed like a man on top, with a shirt, tie and blazer, and like a woman below, with a skirt and stockings. She also began to reveal a physical attraction toward other women. Her mother couldn't deal with her anymore and bought her a house across the street. The strain was too much and she died suddenly in 1973, of a heart attack. Her siblings wanted her to move out but several months later she was back in the main house and before long it

That one dog led quickly to many. She insisted on keeping all the dogs in the house with her, uproarious as that must of have been for her parents, who routinely entertained the social and political elite of Massachusetts. Camilla's father died of lung cancer in 1968, and Camilla plunged into mourning. She started wearing her father's shirts for comfort. Gradually, she edged further into masculine

was running thick with stray cats and dogs that she had found. Several times the health department was brought in, but Camilla didn't care. Eventually she disliked the house, sold it to a developer and moved to Rhode Island. In the end, the developer claims to have renovated the house from top to bottom but still couldn't get the stink out of it.

When Camilla moved, she had few friends and when she

disappeared, no one missed her. Her absence might have gone unnoticed for years if it hadn't been for an old family friend who hadn't received a card for Christmas. The family friend did some searching around and found that trust companies were depositing large amounts of money into her account without knowing the whereabouts of their client. MCI a group founded by ex- FBI officers are specialists in finding missing persons and are still working on this case.

They tried to find information from the few friends that she had and even tried to break into the transsexual network to determine if she in fact had gone off to have a sex-change operation. No more than five female to male sexual transformations involving individuals over 40 had occurred from the time of Camilla's disappearance in July 1987 to the end of 1988 at any authorised medical facility in the world. None of them fit Camilla's description. They learned that

she had a huge aversion to doctors so they ruled out the possibility of her submitting to the most invasive surgery imaginable. Maybe she had gone off with a lover? There had been a woman friend that had once been given a \$1500 brooch, but she downplayed her relationship with Camilla. They did find a connection with a friend of hers in Pennsylvania. They never did determine the friend's gender. "We think he's a man who sometimes dresses as a woman." Camilla had been sending money since the late 70's to this person but that didn't prove any leads for them either. The investigation followed its usual leads, like credit card receipts, telephone records and the like. Nothing. Even if she had the attache' case full of cash, its doubtful, given her rate of spending, that even \$300,000 would of kept her very long.

Had she changed her identity completely? Knowing from CIA history that to pull off a total ID makeover, it requires severing

every last tie with one's past, her attachments were too strong in the dog world. In her will, she asked that her cremated remains be scattered over Madison Square Garden during the Westminster Dog Show. They saw various individuals that were the spitting image of Camilla Lyman, but never proved to be her.

They spoke with surviving family members with out too many clues, a body turned up in the back woods, miles away from anywhere that cannot be identified. Is it her? The headstone is now in place, with no body below and for some people, they feel the case is closed.

How could Camilla Lyman become so thoroughly repulsive that, despite her fortune and her family name, she could disappear from the face of the earth and scarcely be missed by anyone?

This article was originally written by John Sedgwick, a contributing writer to GQ Mag.



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On Being a Cover-girl

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The answer comes in many ways ladies. I'm not all that shy about being who I am, I've been exposed before and I can do it again. Gee, I think I do like the way I look and why not show off. Mind you this should not be interpreted as an ego thing, I wish I looked better and I wish I had the time to try to as well, that's another long story. Lastly, we don't have anyone else available to put on the cover for this issue.

So you say, "Well why didn't you ask me. I would have done it!" I guess you may feel insulted, but let's put it this way. Did you approach the Illusions editors that you would like to be featured? Do you have a half dozen, well produced photographs, especially one that is suitable for a full frame cover picture that we can put lettering onto?

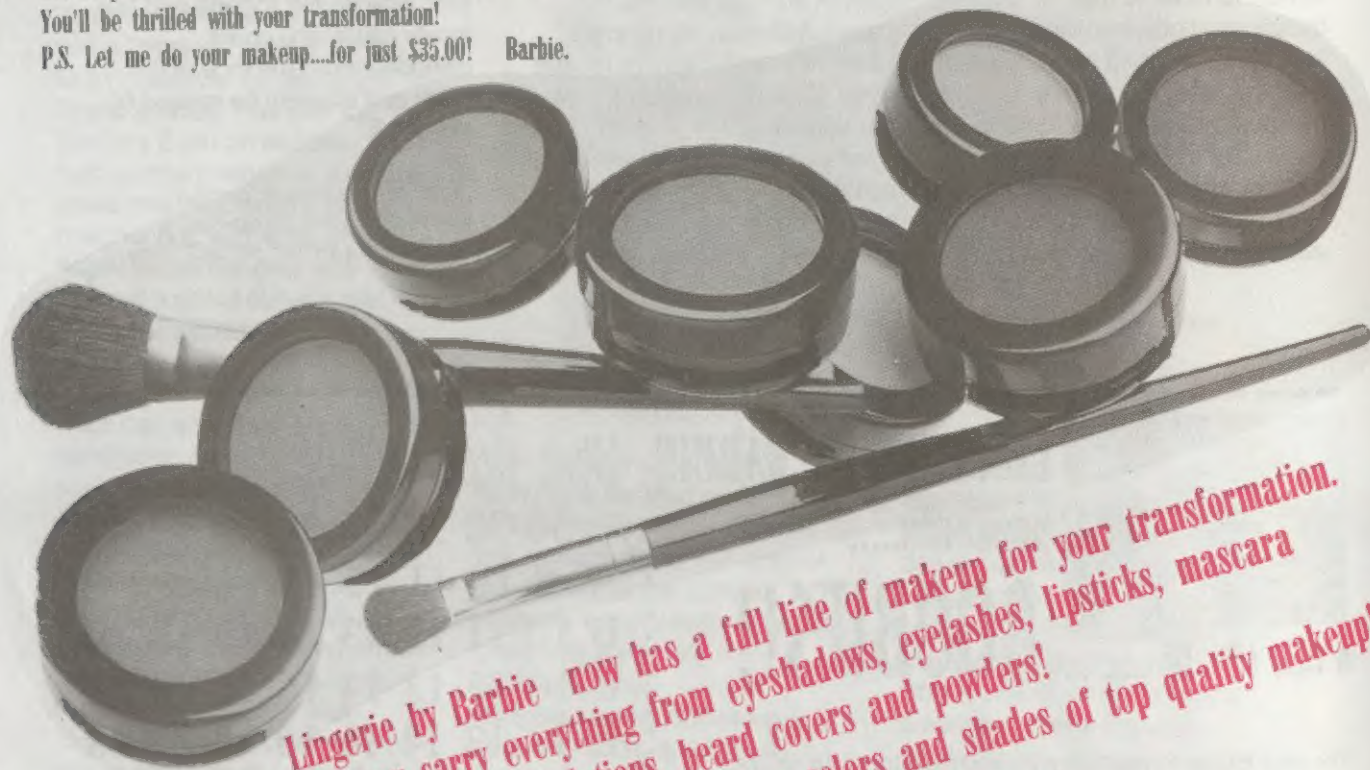
I'm sure some of you do, so we hope to see you about getting onto the cover in the future. Remember this is your magazine, it cannot run without your support and commitment.

As in the holiday tradition - Give before you Receive.

By Lisa (Former Illusions Empress IV)

Do you think I'm vain? This is the second time I am featured on the cover of this fine magazine and some may wonder, why again?

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Christmas Party, Christmas Glitter

*Illusions Annual Celebration of
Friendship and Giving*

**Saturday, December 14
7:30pm**

We hope to see you at one of our biggest parties of the year! This is a special time for us as we get to wear our finest-festive outfits, put up our hair, polish our nails and show the glitter. This is also an event that helps those in need.

Please bring your donations for the **Food Bank** and children's toys for the kids at the **Calgary Women's Shelter**. Your non-perishable food donations and unwrapped toys will be collected at Illusions up to and at the party. Let's continue the strong-giving spirit that we've demonstrated in the past 7 years.

This is a **pot-luck dinner** party so please bring a salad, desert, pop or condiments. When you do, you'll save on the \$10 admission cost. Please call **Christine or Barbie** at 403-237-7072 and tell them what you'll be bringing. Turkey and fixings will be supplied by your hostesses Barbie and Christine.

Christine's Corner

By 2nd Princess Christine Rose

Welcome to the first episode of Christine's Corner. I hope this will be a regular feature in Illusions Magazine. In the coming months I would like to share with you my views about crossdressing and the Illusions social club.

Before I get into this months column let me announce a minor name change. Since there are two prominent members of the club with the name Christine, I decided to start identifying myself as Christine Rose.

One of the biggest fears all people have is the fear of the unknown. This is particularly true of crossdressers who are considering coming out to an Illusions meeting for the first time. I have talked to a number of members about this and most of them found it very difficult to get up the courage to come through the doors for the first time. To help overcome that fear for anyone who has not come out to an Illusions meeting, let me tell you what to expect when you come out to the club. I hope this will also help address the concerns some spouses have about their husbands coming out to the club.

The club's meeting location is in a low traffic, out of the way location and is not identified as a cross dressers club from the outside. This means it is very unlikely you will be seen or identified when you come. When you enter the club through an unmarked back door, you will be greeted by a club member and be asked to sign in (most members use a female name rather than their real male name). There is a door change of \$6.00 per person. \$1.00 goes to charity and the other \$5.00 goes towards the

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cost of the facilities. You will also have the opportunity to purchasing tickets for a 50/50 draw.

For those who cannot or do not wish to get dressed at home, there is a change room and a makeup area. In addition to wearing female clothes most members also like to put on makeup and a wig, but that is not required.

Feel free to ask other members for help with makeup or hair.

Feel free to ask other members for help with makeup or hair. You can dress as casual or as formal as you like. Anything from a fancy party dress, to jeans is

acceptable. The point of the club is to be a safe place to dress the way that makes you feel good.

The club is not a gay bar, but we do not exclude gay people. There is no sexual activities or illegal drug use at the club. Other than the fact that the men are dressed like women it is like any other private function for adults. Most of the members are heterosexual, many are married and a number have children. They come from all walks of life. A few are in some stage of a sex change process, but most are men who simply enjoy expressing their feminine side by wearing women's clothes. There are usually some spouses or girlfriends of members at the meetings. There is a self serve bar, soft drinks, coffee, and some munchies are provided. You can bring your own alcohol if you like. There are tables and chairs set up for members to sit and talk to each other.

Most meetings have some kind of planned activity such as bingo, lip sync performances, or a guest speaker.

Most of the meetings wrap up at about midnight.

At that time members do a variety of things. Some get changed and go home, others go out to one of the crossdresser friendly bars in the downtown area.

I hope this encourages new members and partners to come on out and join us for a good time at the club. In November we will be having our 2nd annual Novice Night. This is an excellent time for new members to come out to their first meetings.

The last few months have been very thought provoking for me. The pace of events has slowed down recently and this has finally given me the time to reflect on much of what has happened since this summer. A couple of incidents here in Edmonton in mid October were the sparks that helped me begin to understand some of these things occurring right in front of me.

As a young crossdresser, I did not know of any place that I could go to to be my inner self other than my closet. When I joined Illusions a mere two years ago(it now seems like a lifetime ago), I learned that there were at least a few places I could go and show my true identity. At these places I learned that they would accept me for who I am with few, if any, strings attached. This, along with the presence of other like minded members, gave me confidence to eventually venture out even further. Since then, I have found many other places where I can go and be accepted for who I am, no matter how I am dressed(even if I am wearing a dress). I

acknowledge that being single has had its advantages in this process. I have not had to consider the feelings or reactions of a partner, as do so many of our members. Being married though, need not be a hindrance. I have tried to explain to members, individually and through my articles, that there is a world out there that will accept us for who and what we are.

Since joining Illusions I have constantly been amazed at the respect given to members of our club.

THRONE SPEECH

FROM

1st Princess VI Rachel C.

During a recent show at a bar, the owner actually interrupted the show to acknowledge our presence and Illusions as a whole for all the work and support we have given to the alternate lifestyle community. I had heard other people make positive comments about our club in the past, but this was unexpected and I was floored! To here someone outside of Illusions publicly state how highly he regards us is truly humbling. For those of you who still are worried about venturing out, you really need not worry. Contact one of the members who you think you might be comfortable with. Arrange to get together with them for an evening out and you will be amazed at the exhilaration you feel in being out at a safe location and being the person you really are. You will not regret it.

Illusions is a great organization that has allowed people to come to terms with their true inner selves. In these turbulent times, every organization has to face change and grow or wither and die.

Illusions has to be adaptable as well. It must have room for those that are just coming to terms with their inner self and those that are prepared to move further ahead in society. The club will be stronger for it.

I guess that since I had spent nearly twenty years in the closet, it took me a long time to realize that there actually are so many doors open to us. It is simply up to you to look for these doors. They are there waiting to be opened by you. You know the way.

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EDMONTON SOCIAL SCHEDULE

Nov 14 - Fashion Show - A few of our girls will be doing a fashion show with clothes from one of the better clothing stores in the city.

Dec 12 - Christmas Dinner - We will be having dinner at one of the crossdresser friendly restaurants in the city. Ask one of the girls for details.

Jan 9 - Make Up Night - We will be having a few of the city's finest drag performers coming in to give us some make up pointers and hopefully a makeover or two.

Feb 15 - Winterfest - A repeat of last years great event. Stay tuned for details

THE GIRLS UP NORTH

FROM
1st Princess VI Rachel C.

After a hectic summer, things have actually started to slow down for this social butterfly. Things have slowed down enough to give me time to powder my nose and that's not a small undertaking.

Needless to say, it took a few days to recover from the ball on the Labour Day weekend. Once again I would like to thank Beth, Brett, Joanne, Dixie, Pauline and Roxy for all their time and hard work that weekend. Over the following few weeks, I heard a number of compliments in how we had set up our display at the gay fair and about our hospitality suite.

In spite of things having slowed down, September and October still have been eventful. We began September with the eminent local psychiatrist, Dr. Warneke, coming out and giving our members an excellent presentation on transgenderism. After his presentation, he spent a lot of time answering questions that the girls had. I think he was truly surprised by how large a group we were and how organized we seemed to be.

A few days after the ball, our Roxanne was asked if she would like to be nominated for the position of "Princess" to the court of the new I.S.C.W.R. Empress Natasha. When it came time to count the votes a few weeks later, it turned out that Roxanne came in a close second to Endora, a long time member of the court. In October, the court held it's board elections, where Roxanne was voted in as the new Vice-President. Way to go Roxanne!

In late September, we had the planned scavenger hunt. Although a lot of work had gone into the event, and every

situation was checked for safety, there were not enough girls that made it out to make it worthwhile to carry through with the event. Needless to say, this reporter was disappointed with the results. There would of been a number of great stories that could have come out of the evening's event to satisfy even this story hungry reporter.

In October we had a wine and cheese party as our Thursday social. The social committee would like to thank Brett for donating some of the wine we sipped that night. The night was intended to get a better grasp on what our members expected from the club. While some members were disappointed, it was decided that we would no longer have regular Saturday socials. This decision was taken because of the lukewarm turnouts to our socials on these nights.

What made this night special thought, was some unexpected recognition Illusions' received. After the social wound down, most of us headed off to Buddy's Pub to carry on socializing. There was a drag show going on that night and during the show, the owner of the pub, Pat, asked us to stand up and be recognized for our contribution to the community in participating in fundraisers and other work. This is the first time I am aware of that any group, other than perhaps the court, has been singled out for such recognition. For me, this is just further confirmation that we have a great group of people here in Illusions'.

I'm now looking forward to our first November social which will be a fashion show with some of our own 'girls' doing the modelling. I'm sure I'll have lots of fodder for my column that night.

To quote a petite, pink and porky actor, "Well, Tttthat's all Folks!"

ARGRA Events and Rodeo Schedule

Dance - November 9th 8:00 p.m.

Christmas Craft Fair - December 14th 12 - 5 p.m.

Cowboy Christmas Dance - December 14th 8:00 p.m.

all events at Victoria Park Community Centre

1997 Canadian Rockies International Rodeo

June 27 - 29 Symons Valley Ranch

for further information call Alberta Rockies Gay Rodeo Association at (403) 541-8140

Ready to Step Out

Welcome to the world of crossdressers. You have now reached the time in your life, where you have made the decision to fulfil your fantasy to a higher level. Until now you have been dressing at home, and you want to broaden your fantasy by leaving home dressed, but you have an extremely nervous feeling about doing so!

In the beginning everyone of us has experienced the same feeling. Speaking for myself, the first time I dressed to go out was late evening. I had gone to another members home to have some alterations done on a skirt, she gave me a dress which would no longer fit her. My friend encouraged me to wear it home which I did.

The word nervous does not adequately describe the feeling I experienced...that evening on the way home. I was convinced beyond a reasonable doubt, that everybody in their cars and even the people on the sidewalk were or would be staring at me. Perhaps some of them did, but if so they did not pay alot of attention to me.

I would not personally advise everyone to travel alone on their first venture out dressed. May I suggest that you have a friend accompany you. Possibly a close friend that accepts your lifestyle or ask another member of Illusions to accompany you. This way you are not likely to be bothered by most people. Some will smile at you, some will stare at you, but most people never look at who is in the car next to them. Even if you are stopped at a light or in the flow of traffic.

Gradually you will begin to feel comfortable when you are out in the car dressed. Before venturing out, plan your route to your destination so that you will arrive as soon as possible. Also have an alternative route should you need to use one for any reason. Always remember to travel on well lit road ways. Never take a road you are not familiar with especially if you are alone.

In the late fall and in the winter months, going out dressed is much easier as it gets dark early. During the spring and summer months, you may feel abit uncomfortable with going out dressed. If you are, may I suggest going to a friends place to dress, or if it is the regular club meeting dress there. This way you will have a safe and enjoyable outing.

It is my belief that as time goes on and you gain more confidence there will always be that slight feeling of nervousness. This will serve to remind you to be cautious when you are out. Hopefully you will be able to avoid any undue stress, from those who do not understand our lifestyle or choose not to accept it.

Always travel with your doors locked, this will prevent anyone from surprising you. If you feel the need for some fresh air do not lower the windows anymore than a half inch, this will prevent anyone from grabbing you through the open window.

It is our sincere hope that all of your outings dressed, will be safe and as enjoyable as possible. Hopefully you will find these suggestions helpful.

Love Joanne #250

HOUSEMATES WANTED

I have a spacious 4BR, 2½ bath home in Charleswood that I would like to share with two responsible, drug-free, quiet but easy-going non-smoking CD/TS or TG+ housemates. 5 minute walk to University & C-Train, 2 minutes to shopping. Room or room+study from \$300 to \$350/month. See member #193 Teri (Empress V) at the club or write P.O. Box 63133-2604 Kensington Rd. NW, Calgary T2N 4S5.

Making it Work for You

Illusions social club exists due to the hard work of the volunteers who clean, buy supplies and contribute to this magazine.

Please offer your help and suggestions to Christine and Barbie. Your help is appreciated by us all.

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TRANVESTISM WITHIN A PARTNERSHIP OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILIES.

BY YVONNE SINCLAIR.

SECOND (REVISED) EDITION..... Continued from the September Issue.

23. I have accepted my partner's transvestism, but now he wants me to accompany him while he is dressed, in public. I cannot face the idea. Am I being unreasonable?

No. This is something which many women object to, and for good reason. During the working week the man may be at work, but the woman is likely to create a circle of friends, both among her immediate neighbours and from the surrounding area. All will enjoy having a chat when they meet, and in normal circumstances would introduce any companion they were with. Though the man might pass for a female at a distance, very few will bear inspection at close quarters. Many do not have feminine features, and when they aim for a glamorous image they will often appear to be over made up. Covering the beard shadow is often a problem, and in their attempts to present a more feminine look, the make up is apt to be excessive. Even if he was not detected immediately, it would soon be realized, due to the different reactions; voice, gestures, etc. and the deception detected. Any woman would dread such a possibility, and the ensuing embarrassment caused by the almost inevitable gossip. At best, a woman's life is mundane; housework and shopping can be a drudge. She cherishes her friends and acquaintances; meeting them are highlights in her day, and to lose these contacts would bring loneliness. Unless the woman, whether wife or girlfriend, is willing, then the matter should be dropped. Demands such as these will help no one; and every woman has a perfect right refuse if she feels she cannot accept such a proposal.

24 My partner has started dressing again after many years of not doing so, and more so since I have felt no

need of a sexual relationship. Can this be a reason.

To be honest I think this is the reason. Though you may no longer feel the need for sexual intercourse, your partner might still feel sexual. As, in the past, transvestism served as a sexual fantasy role for him to ease his frustration, he has returned to it as an outlet. Since you know of his transvestism, it can safely be brought into the open, and it will help if you talk it over. Remember that it should mean nothing more to you that he is using women's clothes as a sexual fetish than if you found he was using "girlie" books. Both are the same; both aid him in his fantasy, leading to masturbation - nature's release from frustration.

25 I saw a Drag Act in a pub after I learned of my partner's transvestism. I found them crude, and a parody of women. Are they transvestites?

It is not unreasonable to assume that some of them have transvestite tendencies, but in "Men in Frocks" (Published in 1984) there are some forty mentions of drag acts, and only one chapter dealing with transvestism and transsexuality. Other than this, none of the artistes interviewed mentioned or referred to themselves as transvestites. Most of them are gay people who mime to records, or produce caricatures of women, with exaggerated mannerisms and often some crudity; mainly in gay venues. From one point of view they might be frightening to the onlooker, but they do make the public aware that transvestism exists, and that men do dress as women for reasons other than sexual stimulation.

Often, the transvestite who has little chance of outward expression will adopt an exaggeratedly 'tarty' image, using clothing which gives a glamour

look, or fetishistic styles. If there is such a thing as true transvestism, it is those who adopt the conventional styles of fashion as worn by women of their own age group; emulating, in fact, average women. For some, this might be their supposed first steps to thinking that they are transsexual rather than transvestite.

Some transvestites believe that female impersonators are also transvestites; perhaps you have also made this common mistake. However, very few transvestites ever become female impersonators - the inhibitive nature of transvestism precludes the high form of exhibitionism needed by the female impersonator.

26 The media often portray the transvestite as a murderer or child molester, ("Dressed to Kill", "Kiss of the Spider Woman") are they really like that.

An emphatic 'NO' would be wrong. However, is there any grouping within human society where we can say it does, or does not happen? No area of human expression is immune from individuals who might maim or hurt others. Films, etc., invariably need a storyline in which a character has to be outside the norm. It is all too easy to ascribe to those who already stand outside 'normal' society behaviour patterns and modes over and above the simple impulse to transvestism or transsexuality. They are a small minority in society, but it is reasonable to believe that a couple could be child molesters, or even murderers, but they would amount to only a minute proportion of the total population of transvestites and transsexuals; certainly no larger a percentage than that in humanity at large.

Transvestism is not about hurt, strength, hate; quite the reverse. Society sees women as mothers, lovers and providers; and as soft, gentle

people. It is sad to see them degraded, relegated, used in a debased way - in films which are disgusting to the most hardened person. We are disgusted because we love women for their gentleness and compassion. Transvestites adopt these qualities for themselves through the act of dressing. To a degree, it might also be said that transvestites are cowards - evading their responsibilities in society, and of the male in his marriage and work role. In their emulation of the female, they do not look for an aggressive image, preferring the stereotype image of the female; quite unlike their portrayal in several recent films.

One better example of a film showing a person dressing as a woman was the Oscar nomination "Tootsie" starring Dustin Hoffman. In the film he took on a female role in a television soap opera, and the character he was playing became a cult figure. This is one of the few films made where the transvestite was not depicted as a murderer or a criminal. Another film "Some Like It Hot" starred Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon as two musicians who dressed as females to escape from gangsters. Marilyn Monroe, who was the sex bomb of the era, made it perfectly clear throughout the film that neither of her two co-stars were anything other than men in female dress. At the end of the film, where Jack Lemmon told the amorous Joe E. Brown, "But I'm a man!" - Joe's answer said it all: "Nobody's perfect!" It is a great pity that today, with entertainment piped into every front room, producers seem unable to revive the simple humour, fun and enjoyment of life without resorting to drugs, murder, rape, as the recurring themes. Why not productions in which the actors might be given the opportunity to show that transvestites, transsexuals, gays, are just normal people, rather than projecting an image of sexual violence or worse?

Prisons are not filled with transvestites or transsexuals, but with respectable people - whose neighbours and friends are amazed to hear the lists of their criminal acts; horrified to learn that

they have committed crimes from murder to rape. Yet the most innocent and gentle of people, transvestites and transsexuals, are almost invariably depicted as the exact opposite in 'entertainment' for the viewing public. **27 I found some books which dealt with transvestism, which I found disgusting. There were photographs of men dressed as women, in underwear, etc., exposing themselves. Why?**

Because transvestism is a highly sexual form of expression, i.e. for masturbation. Often, because the person concerned is unable to relieve his frustration because he is not able to crossdress, he will buy trashy commercial magazines which depict transvestism in its ugliest form. Not all transvestism is exhibitionism; of men attired as women with their genitalia exposed. Transvestism is an imaginative fantasy in which the person will see himself in many variations of being dressed as a woman; they are likely to find themselves becoming sexually excited if they read of a transvestite in a newspaper report or a magazine article. They will relate the story to their own experiences, and pleasure they obtain by dressing in women's clothes; or imagine themselves in the situation described in such an article or report.

The obscenity of such pornography as you saw may be offensive to you; but to the individual transvestite they are proof that other men crossdress, as they do. There are also many 'girlie' magazines; soft and hard pornographic publications in which girls, men and sometimes even animals are portrayed. Such magazines have a market; some men derive sexual satisfaction from them, and commercial entrepreneurs will capitalize on any deviation from the norm, exploiting the compulsions of these individuals. Whether they continue to play a significant part in the future life of the individual transvestite depends entirely on whether he realizes that he collected them for reassurance - to see that there are others with the same desires as himself. Many authors have equated

transvestism simply as dressing for masturbation - which is rather like saying that men marry only to have sexual intercourse. Certainly transvestites do masturbate, but probably no more than the average male, married or single. The difference is that their fantasies, through which they achieve sexual excitement, are by crossdressing as females. However, transvestism is not solely an act of dressing up for masturbation; it covers a vast area of sexual and sensual pleasures and feelings which the transvestite finds difficult to express in words. Most will say that the act of dressing provides them with a sense of relief, comfort and escape. The books might possibly have played a part in satisfying their needs.

Confrontation, and an explanation, are your right. When the transvestite is caught out, he will suffer a great deal of anxiety with regard to your future actions. If the transvestism has been unknown until that moment, we have already explained the reasons for your disgust in other answers within this book.

I would point out that not all transvestite literature deals with the subject in a perverse way - this booklet is one example of a clear approach, and there are other journals and magazines published by our own, and other organizations, which are quite helpful. Often, for the transvestite, reading such journals for the first time will give him a sense of order and a better perspective, and the same might be said for his partner.

If you discuss the objectionable books with your partner, and make your objections to such literature quite clear, I am sure you will find he will be willing to destroy them. The transvestite is unlikely to wish to make use of such erotica in the future, but will be content with the more mature and realistic approach of journals such as our own publication, "The Glad Rag."

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The Three Dimensional Hyperspace of Human Sexuality

Part 1 of a short series of essays on sex, gender and transgenderism

Roxanne Hurd-Pride

As a councillor at the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton one of the most frequent issues I face with newly out transgendered persons is their great deal of confusion over sex and gender. People want to know where they belong and they want a neat answer. This confusion and sense of personal displacement, I believe, is largely the result of our trying to shoehorn the great complexity of human sexual identity into the narrow parameters allowed by our bipolar Judeo-Christian heritage. This brief essay is an attempt to present a more dynamic but still relatively simplistic model that hopefully will allow a greater understanding of sexuality and gender and provide a greater sense of place. The ideas I present is derived from an excellent work entitled "Transgender Nation."

There are three variables: sex, gender, and sexual preference. Sex is anatomically defined, for simplicity we will use only male and female, recognizing of course the existence of biological hermaphrodites. Gender is a self identification, it is what you perceive yourself to be and what your behavioral tendencies are, in this case we shall stick to masculine and feminine. Sexual preference is who you are sexually attracted to. Rather than use straight or gay, I prefer to use the more basic "I like men," "I like women."

I recognize this is ethnocentric as it ties sexual preference to anatomical sex, and there are other cultures that define sexual preference on the basis of gender. In the west, we tie sexual preference to anatomical sex.



Under our Judeo-Christian heritage, life is very simple because there are no choices. All three elements are intrinsically tied together and are based on sex. And since our culture recognizes only two sexes, male and female, there are only two possible states of being, hence the name bipolar. If you are born male, you will have masculine character traits and behaviour, and you will like girls. Conversely, if you are born female, you will have feminine character traits and behaviour, and you will like boys. And never the twain shall meet! There is no choice, there are only two natural states of being and you are born to be one or the other. No wonder we're confused. Gays and transgendered persons simply do not exist under this model! The fact that we do exist, however, destabilizes the model. And as any good scientist will tell you, data has precedence over hypothesis. So, because of little told us, our society is faced with rejecting the bipolar model. But western society has several

millennia invested in this model, many people like it, it is comfortable, you don't have to think. And like all popular paradigms (e.g. the earth is the centre of the universe), people are loath to give this one up. Rather than change the model it seems more convenient to get rid of us. In fact a number of scholars have attributed this state-of-affairs as being one of the root causes of homo- and transgenderphobia. Why this particular model was chosen by the ancients is extremely complex and makes for fascinating reading -- and much speculation. However, I don't have several dozen pages to devote to the subject so I'll skip it, except to say that it is basically a model which ensures procreation, at the expense of all other reasons for being human. It was developed by small groups of people who were not particularly popular when their social structures were being developed. You're a small group of people and you're constantly threatened with genocide. What would be a basic tenant in your society? Go figure.

Anyways it's now the 20th century and soon to be the 21st. We've seen a few social changes in the past few millennia and can now afford a slightly different world view. One of these views is that there is no inherent biological/psychological reason why sex, gender and sexual preference have to be linked.

Remember that all persons are equal.

Next issue will continue this thought process with diagrams etc. There are many dimensional points in the subject of human sexuality!

Till next time...Roxanne

LETTERS

Dear Barbie & Christine,

Because of a recent situation that occurred to me, I would like to share it with the girls of ILLUSIONS.

"TRANSGENDERISM AND THE LAW"

Recently I had reason to have dealings with the Officers of our local Law Enforcement Agency, which convinced me that our law enforcement professionals are concerned over issues pertaining to the transgendered community. Especially since this incident required me to be taken to hospital. Since I was dressed in female clothing, and it was required that I be taken to the emergency admitting room, I found that I was not treated any differently than non crossdressers who might find themselves in a similar predicament. The respect that was shown for my dignity, was commendable indeed. Because of my appearance, they felt that I should not be subjected to the gawking and gaping of the people in the waiting room, instead they requested a private waiting area for my Wife, Daughter and I. The Police Officers concerned even referred the attention of a specific counsellor to my case, as opposed to the one on duty. My wife later informed me that they showed extreme concern for my well being that she had never believed police officers are capable of.

So girls, having learned from my situation, I would like to pass along this advice; If you are ever in a situation in which the Police are involved, do not be ashamed of yourself, be proud of the way you look. Be even more proud of who you are and what you believe in. There are people out there that care about you, and will not prejudge you or jump to irrational conclusions based on how you look or what you might be.

Sincerely, Karrie, Red Deer.

Dear Christine,

As you know, the ILLUSIONS girls in Edmonton have been selling tickets for a wig draw these last two months. When Roxanne and I had talked to you this spring, you mentioned that you could help Edmonton's social club out. The girls up here are finally ready to do the wig draw. I would appreciate it if you could send the gift certificate to us in care of my address. We will be having the draw later this month at one of our socials. On behalf of all the girls here, I would like to thank you again for your help in our fundraising efforts, and all the other help you have given us over the years.

Sincerely, Rachel, 1st Princess VI.



Please write to us with your stories and experiences.... it all helps for us to learn about ourselves!

Dear Barbie,

Hi! This is just a thought or two about your recent editorial article. For what it's worth, since you don't really know me from a hill of beans. Here's my two bit opinion: Never having met you, though all reports indicate that you're really cool, I'm in no position to be making any smart alecky judgements on your view points. I would like to comment on the stand that you took in the next to latest issue.

Personally, the page was still smokin' for several weeks after I'd read it. "Wow", thought I. I really don't know this Barbie person, but I like her already! You managed to stomp a whole bunch of toes with very few words. Some near me, a little toe stomping is necessary from time to time. You also made some very sharp points. I loved it, and would encourage you not to think of it as being bitchy, rather plain honesty, coming from the basis that you care, go for it girl.

I especially liked the now legendary, "Clutching pantyhose" remarks, as one of the enclosed "Stitches" cartoons will attest. It was a great one liner, Thanks.

So keep up the good work, and don't be afraid to twist the knife a little once it's in. You might lose one or two people for a little while, but more than make up for it with the rewards of having grateful girls, that can correct unladylike behaviour they might not be aware of. If we don't know how to carry ourselves as girls, (and what man does) then all we are is a bunch of louts in dresses. I'd like to see more of that type of commentary. No "correction is ever fun at the time, but keep it up and girls will come back to thank you for it, like me.

I guess that's all, I look forward to making it out there to Calgary soon and getting my share of "overload". Personally, I can't wait! Sounds cool, Take care.

Love and respects, Nikki #374

Dear Christine and Barbie,

Hi girls, enclosed are my membership renewal form and payment for another year, also a dozen "Stitches" cartoons that should keep you busy for a while, and this ditzy letter. I hope the cartoons are in un-mangled condition and that the girls are getting used to them. Pray tell, has anyone said anything, i.e. I like it, I hate it, I got kids that draw better than that, whatever.

Christine, I understand that you're just about ready for the big op, Congrats. I'm sure that you've investigated Montreal thoroughly and have talked to numerous gals that have had the procedure done there. I know a gal from Phoenix, Arizona, now living in Massachusetts, that worked her butt off, and actually drove to montreal to have her GRS done at that hospital by the same doctor. She said the pain of recovery was nothing compared to how sore her buns were by the time she got there. Anyway, if you are interested in talking with her about

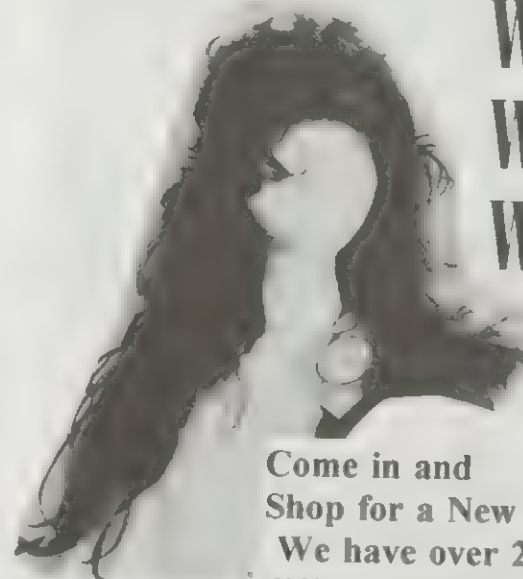
LETTERS.....

her experience there, I could put you on to her, I'm sure she wouldn't mind. She's very nice, I have asked her. Her GRS was in February, and at this point she couldn't be more pleased with the results. Just let me know if you are interested.

I know that you've waited a long time, and been through a lot in your journey. You must be weary and just want the thing over with already. I wish I could have been there to hold my friends hand. Girls are the bravest people in the world, I do hope as one friend mentioned to me, that after the GRS, you don't drift away and lose interest in crossdressers. As was pointed out to me, this seems to happen frequently, various publications have come along, and then gone as soon as the TS in question achieves the desired level of funding. That seems so sad for me to hear. I apologise if this sounds just awful, not that you would do anything like that. My point being that we really need you and at least, I admire and appreciate what you are doing. So never, never, leave us Christine, I uvs ya and needs ya... yup we do! Keep the faith Girl. Yours, Nikki # 374

Editors note:

Dear Nikki,
Thanks very much for your sincere words of encouragement, supportive comments and feed back. Don't worry I'll likely be around for a while yet.
Christine.



**WIGS
WIGS
WIGS!**

Come in and
Shop for a New Wig!
We have over 20
different styles in stock!

Prices very reasonable.
Lingerie by Barbie 6802 Ogden Road

Dear Barbie,

Thank you for sending your catalogue and especially the copy of the ILLUSIONS magazine. I am a married grandfather in my early 60's, and have been struggling for almost 50 years to accept the fact that I am a crossdresser. You know, the binge, purge and guilt syndrome! Just reading your magazine has given me some hope that I will be able to FINALLY accept the fact that I am what I am, cannot and do not want to change. I have enjoyed reading the "Transvestism within a Partnership of Marriage and Families." by Yvonne Sinclair. I would like to obtain the back issues containing chapters 1 through 13, and have enclosed a money order for these back issues. I hope to eventually join your ILLUSIONS Social Club, and possibly communicate with others who are, or were in the same situation as I was. Thank You for helping me to see a bit of (pardon the mixed metaphor) "Light at the end of the Closet."

Thank you again,

"G, Ontario."

To Illusions: Hi there ! I recently purchased your magazine for the first time and I am impressed with your club. And very interested in joining it and possibly assisting helping out if you could use a hand? It's definately what I seek as I will be relocating to either Edmonton or Calgary very soon. (Winnipeg is destroying my free spirit ways). But before I join, could you please tell me more about your club? How often is your magazine published?

I'm also keen on placing my own ad and have a photo for later!

Thanks a Bunch! Lisa

"Thanks to all of you gals that take the time to write to us. It's nice to know that we are reaching out to all sorts of gals coast to coast."

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Illusions....Calgary social events

Please note: as of the last Social (Saturday, Oct. 12) all future Thursday Socials have been changed to the last Friday of each month. So the next Friday Social will be held at the Club on November 29 and there will be no Friday Social in December. Watch the events calendar for the proper dates in the future.

2ND ANNUAL NOVICE NIGHT, Friday, November 29. Building on the success of the first Novice evening, experienced members will continue to pass on how to tips designed to help new members speed up their learning curve. Subjects covered will include basic foundation, nails, wig care and where to find the things you need to become the Grrrl of your dreams!

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POT LUCK PARTY, Saturday, December 14. Held at the Club, this is Traditionally one of our biggest in house events of the year. A gala dress up event full of party dresses fellowship and best wishes for all our aspirations for the coming year! The door charge is \$10.00/ person, however if you bring a food item for the pot luck meal, you get in FREE! It's a great evening so don't miss it!

WELCOME TO 1997 and our THIRD ANNUAL BINGO NIGHT, Saturday, January 18. After taking a galloping pole it seems you Grrrl's still want to play Bingo. Lots of fun and prizes. Mr. Ty Morgan has once again donated one of his fabulous Makeovers as the major prize of the evening! **REGULAR SOCIAL, Friday January 31.** There is no theme or event scheduled for this social. A good evening for a chat with old friends.

2ND ANNUAL LOS VEGAS NIGHT, Saturday, February 15. The theme is "SHOWGIRLS". This is the night that allows you to dust off your sequins, satin gloves etc. and drape yourself in rhinestones and a feather boa! Gambling for fun venues are provided as a distraction as your "glittering self" wiles the evening away within the walls of the "Pink Palace Casino"! As an added attraction this year, a short but lively Vegas style stage show will be performed. So hey Babe's lets go to Vegas!

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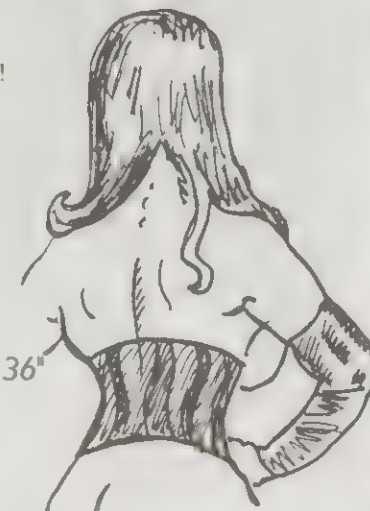
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from page 8...Throne Speech

Niagara in a barrel, stop and think about what I just said.

While we are still on the subject of housekeeping, here is a small point to think about. Nikki, one of my out of town pen pals, has written to me and asked why is it that so many of the Illusions members that she has written to via the newsletter registry have not written back! Hey Nikki, I don't know why and I could candy coat it but I won't. Beats me, I answer all my letters and I have already written to Nikki two or three times. Sometimes I am too busy to return a letter the next day and sometimes the content of a letter may go beyond my knowledge? When that happens I have to stop and think about it for a while ...I have to think, what will I say? **But I always respond**, even if in the end it is only to say, please don't write to me again! Having said that, to date I have never had to tell anyone that I don't want them to write to me again. On the contrary, I have developed some great friendships via the mail and consider returning a letter as just part of the maintenance required to continue our friendship. Nikki is not the first to mention this to me, it appears that many Illusions members within the registry, despite how they frame their adds, **don't always answer their mail.....go figure!** My point is you should always answer your mail. Why? Because you got it! And why did you get it.....well because you put your picture and a message in the registry? Nikki has a valid point in saying that it is just a common courtesy to reply to your mail. My feeling is that if you are not prepared to do this or find that you just don't have the time, then maybe you should do a little bit of housekeeping and modify or remove your add from the registry. Please think about this.

You know you could really hurt the feelings of some person, who is totally in awe of you through your presentation in the newsletter and finally gets up the nerve to write you **only to receive silence as a reply!**

One last item before I go. It's time for those people who may have aspirations to become "Illusions" Empress VII to begin getting ready!!! Believe it or not, by the time you read this my Reign as "Illusions" Empress VI will have reached the halfway point. It seems like I just got started and haven't done anything much of value yet! Time passes quickly when you are busy with lot's of things to do. There are many aspects to being an "Illusions" Empress. To date each new Empress has brought her own idea's and agenda together, creating a theme for her Reign. For instance, my theme as Empress VI is to be a good steward and continue to promote the many worthwhile programs started by my predecessors and to promote club unity. In addition, I have an interest in outreach, whether this be towards the need s of new members or traveling to new communities and venues in an effort to promote "Illusions" and our lifestyle. So, it's time to start thinking about "your" involvement and what your theme might be. In the early days of "Illusions" you put your name in the ring and then got up on stage at the Birthday Party and did a performance. The people present voted for the best performance and person with the most votes became the next Empress. It seems now that people also take into account what you have done as a member during the previous year and what your standing is in the greater community beyond the four walls of the "Pink Palace". Were you an involved and supportive participant in club

activities etc.? That is why I mention it now and although time passes quickly, there is still ample time and opportunity for you address this part of your campaign. So come on all you aspiring "Empress's", get busy and start strutting your stuff! On a **very personal** note about this subject, I would like to say this Empress 3-1/2 & IV Lisa, Empress V Teri and Empress VI Michelle, each have at that particular time of their lives been willing to devote time and resources to expanding the Empress role and it's meaning, both for themselves and for the greater "Illusions" membership. Evolving events have allowed us to do this. Don't let our activities scare you away, for after all they only represent our own personal agenda's! As has been stated many times, there are no rules for being an "Illusions" Empress. There are only three assets that an aspiring "Illusions" Empress needs. First, you need to be able to be a good hostess, you know, a person that feels comfortable with all kinds of people with different interests. Second, you have to be a person who is concerned about other people's feelings and also be willing to promote their desires and goals even when you don't totally agree with them. Third, you need the energy to support these things and yourself during your reign. So there you go, Hostess, concern and energy. Assets that just about everybody has when called upon. As I look around me, I see so many that qualify! So come on Grrrl's, let's go for it! Who will be "Illusions" Empress VII?

As Always, Love & Best Wishes,
Michelle Hart

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